

Correlates of attempted suicide among young injection drug users in a multi-site cohort.

Havens JR, Strathdee SA, Fuller CM, Ikeda R, Friedman SR, Des Jarlais DC, Morse PS, Bailey S, Kerndt P, Garfein RS; Collaborative Injection Drug User Study Group.

The purpose of this study was to determine the prevalence and correlates of attempted suicide among young injection drug users (IDUs) from six study sites in five US cities. Two thousand two hundred and nineteen participants 15-30 years of age underwent interviewer-administered questionnaires relating to self-reported drug use, sociodemographics, suicidal ideation and attempts, and exposure to violence. The 6-month prevalence of suicidal ideation and attempts was 35.8% (n = 795) and 7% (n = 156), respectively. Compared to those not reporting a recent (past 6 months) suicide attempt, those attempting suicide were more likely to have a lifetime history of mental health facility admission or sexual abuse. Participants receiving drug treatment at the time of the baseline interview (53.2% versus 37.1%, odds ratio [OR] = 1.93, 95% confidence interval [CI]: 1.39, 2.67) were also more likely to report a recent attempt; as were those reporting a history of experiencing violence. These associations persisted after adjusting for age, sex, race/ethnicity, study site, and other significant covariates by multiple logistic regression. These data suggest that increased access to drug treatment, community mental health, and violence prevention programs may decrease suicidal behavior among young injection drug users.